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ABSTRACT

Vocational guidance and counseling is supported by the United States government through a variety of laws. The Vocational Education Act (VEA) and other federal legislation consistently provide funds for services to assist in the transition from education/training to work, from unemployment to employment, or from one career to another. Most legislation portrays vocational guidance as an ancillary service. Multiple funding and legislative mandates have made coordination of federal programs and funding sources for vocational guidance difficult. Responsibility for such coordination efforts has been delegated to the local level, where inconsistent terminology that is interpreted differently by administrators and practitioners and other responsibilities of local school guidance personnel act as barriers to administrative efficiency and coordination. Proposed changes to the VEA's guidance provisions would make guidance part of the core programs by funding it out of the basic federal program grant and ensuring inclusion of guidance programs and personnel in all aspects of the ACT's program. A unique role exists for the federal government in the collection, delivery, and utilization of occupational information through the activities of the Employment Service, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Bureau of the Census, and the National and State Occupational Information Coordinating Committees. (Legislative summaries are appended.) (YLB)

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VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE: POLICY OPTIONS WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION ACT AND OTHER FEDERAL LEGISLATION

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August 1981

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SUMMARY

The focus of this paper is the legislative and regulatory context for Federal support of Vocational Guidance, specifically through the Vocational Education Act, and implications for change in this context to improve administrative efficiency and effectiveness.

The author chose a question and answer format for this material in the expectation that readers would come to the subject with different levels of familiarity and could target their attention on topics of interest in an order that made most individual sense. What often is lost in this style is a sense of the cumulative impact of the information contained in these responses. Hence, this summary of the basic points made in the paper.

- Vocational Guidance and Counseling is supported by the U. S. Congress through a variety of laws, especially those having to do with transitions from education or training to the world of work. A major difference in the laws is not the concept of the vocational guidance and counseling process, but of the various groups of individuals whom Congress believes require these services.

- The legislation does not define Vocational Guidance and Counseling, but consistently provides funds for:

  - assessment of individual abilities, interests, and capabilities;
  - the provision of information about jobs, occupations, and opportunities in the world of work;
  - services of a counselor working with individuals and groups to assist them in making career decisions; and
  - development of knowledge, abilities, and talents to make and carry out career choices.

- A growing body of empirical evidence suggests that vocational guidance and counseling, particularly in combination with other training and educational experiences, is effective in achieving Congressionally sought outcomes such as longer and more stable employment, reduced periods of unemployment, greater flexibility in changing jobs, and a reduction in incidence of school absenteeism, criminal recidivism, dropping out, and other behaviors.

- Most legislation portrays vocational guidance and counseling as an ancillary or support service to other activities and does not see it as part of the core program of services. Funds are secured through mandated setaside expenditures which are seldom reflected in accountability reports. Consequently, it is nearly impossible to ascertain how much is actually being spent on these services or the variety of programs being supported.

- One draft proposal from the Vocational Guidance Community for re-authorization of VEA would make guidance and counseling an integral part of the core programs by (1) funding it out of the basic Federal program grant, and (2) assuring the inclusion of guidance programs and personnel in all aspects of the Act's program, including representation on advisory and planning boards.

- The Federal Government plays a unique role in the collection, delivery, and utilization of occupational information through the activities of the Employment Service, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Bureau of the Census, and the National and State Occupational Information Coordinating Committees.

  - Despite criticisms and suggestions for improvement, these Federally supported efforts, e.g., the *Dictionary of Occupational Titles*, and the *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, remain the primary source of information about occupations and future needs.

  - The NOICC/SOICC network has grown steadily since Congressional establishment in 1976 and continues to offer technical assistance in the development of occupational information for planning and counseling needs.

The picture that emerges from this review is one of a field moving into a central role in assisting individuals to make transition from school to work when beginning their work lives, and to make career-related changes throughout life. This may be seen as a major change in the perception of the guidance function not yet reflected in major changes in the law. One also gets the impression that experts in the field are continuing to work toward the improvement of the materials and procedures (vocational assessment and occupational information, for example) that they use to counsel individuals.

- One criterion for change in policy would be the impact of guidance and counseling services on individuals. While the empirical data suggest that programs with a guidance and counseling component are more successful than ones without it, the impact of variations to fit individual groups' needs or adaptations in program delivery are not well enough understood to suggest major policy changes.

- The impact of multiple funding opportunities and legislative mandates is unclear. It has made coordination of Federal efforts difficult and an assessment of cumulative impact impossible. At the local level, the practical incentives for coordination and collaboration are not strong. As a result, the guidance professional's efforts go in many directions, often leaving the programs as separate as their legislative sources.

- Consideration of guidance and counseling issues will probably be overshadowed by Congressional concern for consolidation of education programs into block grants. Without a clearer understanding of the impact of these possible changes, it is difficult to chart a certain course for guidance and counseling programs.

What Is Vocational Guidance?

While uncertainty and variety in the use of terms and definitions seem to exist in the counseling field itself (Shertzer, 1980), a consistent sense emerges from the Federal legislation dealing with vocational guidance. The basic understanding suggests that vocational guidance assists individuals in the transition from education/training to work, from unemployment to employment, or from one career to another. Guidance programs and events are designed to help individuals of all ages make decisions about education or training programs and select the best-for-them immediate job or longer-term occupational areas.

Thus, with varying emphases, vocational guidance would involve some form of three basic activities:

Appraisal: Collecting, analyzing, and using a variety of subjective personal, psychological, and social data about individuals for the purpose of better understanding them and helping them better understand themselves.

Information: Providing individuals with greater amount and better quality knowledge of educational, vocational, and personal-social opportunities so that they make better informed choices and decisions.

Counseling: Facilitating the individual's self-development, self-understanding, and decision-making through one-on-one or group sessions with a counselor.

Skill Development: Directing the students' educational experiences to develop their knowledge, abilities, and talents for self-discovery, decision making, job search, and the other tasks which enable the individual to make and carry out their career choices.

In practice, these activities often take place in the course of the training or education program. For example, students may be required to have their courses approved by a counselor before registration is complete. Or every student may have an opportunity to take an interest profile and spend time with a counselor discussing the results, and searching out additional information. Finally, vocational counseling may be offered as a

set of program activities under the banner of "Job Search Education," "Employability Skills Training," "Job Survival Skills," "Displaced Homemaker," or some other title. In this case, vocational guidance is more extensive with particular emphasis on how to act on the job and/or practicing techniques of finding and keeping a job.

Appraisal of interests, abilities, aptitudes, and other student information is generally aided by one of many publicly available instruments, such as the Kuder Preference Test, Strong-Campbell Interest Inventory, General Aptitude Test Battery, Singer Lab, etc. Ideally, and often in practice, the individual is able to review the results of these appraisals with a counselor and to interpret them in terms of the kinds of jobs or career fields he/she may be interested in. For some, there are built-in procedures to go directly to information about career fields of interest. This information would include descriptions of the kinds of jobs available in the field; what types of working conditions exist; what education, training, and/or experience is required; the recent salary ranges available to the workers in this field; and, in some cases, an estimate of how much demand there will be in the immediate and longer-term future for workers in this job.

Over 30 states have developed or purchased the capability to deliver career information through use of computer technology. While systems vary in their capabilities, the kinds of assistance they give, and the grographical coverage of the state, it is possible for an individual to use computer technology to identify a match between his/her interests, abilities, experience, etc., and one or more related career fields. This technology is not magic. It simply allows the individual access to more information in less time than browsing in libraries or relying on an individual counselor's knowledge and skill. Their value, too, is heavily dependent on the quantity and quality of information available within the system.

The link between appraisal and information is a critical one in the counseling process. To be successful, a similar language has to be used to describe individual human attributes, skills, and interests and the requirements of the work opportunities in the labor market. The accuracy of these parallel descriptions should be of some concern to those interested in vocational guidance and counseling, and will be discussed later. It is of interest to the legislator, however, that almost all the currently available material relies on information supplied by the Federal Government or gathered through efforts heavily or totally subsidized by the Federal Government.

Armed with the results of the appraisal and the link to career and job areas, the individual student can then consult the available materials to find out more about them. Many school or community libraries have extensive collections of information about the labor market--books, pamphlets, fliers, brochures, vacancy notices, job positions, etc. Some local communities have gathered the names, addresses, and phone numbers of individuals currently employed in various fields who have volunteered to talk with students interested in additional information/insights into "what it is like to be....."

Throughout this process, the guidance counselor will work with the student in a number of ways. Counselors explain the interest appraisal process and assist the student when necessary to complete the forms. They help students interpret the results and probe for additional information that will be useful to the students. Counselors then assist students to find or direct the students to the information available in the school or community library or to individuals who can be useful resources. In areas where

computerized systems are available, the counselor often instructs and assists the student in the use of the system.

In fairness, a large amount of the guidance counselor's time is not spent assisting students with career and occupational decisions. In a recent national survey of career information systems and practices in secondary schools, about two-thirds of the schools said that less than 30 percent of their counselors' professional time was spent assisting students with occupational choices and career planning (excluding college admissions and selection). (Educational Testing Service, p. 80.)

It is also fair to note that a complete program to assist an individual's movement into or out of a career area would include many other activities such as cooperative education, work exploration, job placement, etc., and would call for the services of many other professionals in addition to the vocational counselor.

To bring this answer full circle, the National Vocational Guidance Association emphasizes the use of the term "guidance" to describe the sets of activities involved in the learning process described here. The term "counseling" is omitted from the title to emphasize that the services are possibly broader than what the school counselor traditionally has provided and that the counselor, while often taking a lead role in serving students, is only one of a team of professionals who could be involved in this service. (Pinson, et al, n.d.)

Does Vocational Guidance Make a Difference?

Apparently yes.

The tentativeness of this reply has many sources. Primarily, the problems of assessing the impact of social service programs which have confronted public officials, particularly in the last 15 years of increased social program legislation. These problems include finding proper and fair comparison/control groups, taking account of pre-existing conditions, identification of the precise services offered, the inconsistency of service from program to program, and the inadequacy of many social science measurement techniques.

All these problems are present in studies of the impact of vocational guidance and counseling. They are compounded by the ancillary role of counseling in the array of services offered to clients. It is usually impossible to separate out the "vocational counseling" from other services such as job training, basic skill or remedial instruction, job placement, work experience or exploration, etc.

As a consequence, the set of conclusions and recommendations from the NIE-sponsored review of guidance and counseling (Herr and Pinson, 1980) places heavy emphasis on supporting a variety of efforts to determine the impact of various counseling practices, both as stand-alone services and in conjunction with other activities.

Despite these limitations, Herr, after reviewing several dozen available reports, concluded, "While this body of evidence is not unequivocal, it is, in the aggregate, quite positive." (Herr, 1980.)

Because of the difficulties of separating the guidance and counseling services from those with which they are associated, many of the studies are comparisons of the education or training programs with counseling components to those without, or of guidance and counseling offered as an isolated service. The evidence is reviewed in the Herr article and in the NGVA/AVA Statement (Pinson, et al, 1981). Several statements in the latter document summarize the picture that emerges from the studies reviewed:

> "Documentation that guidance and counseling programs accompanying vocational skill programs render a longer labor market advantage to the graduate persists in the literature. Beneficiaries of this collaboration are more likely to hold onto their jobs, get work more quickly, transfer job skills and objectives to a larger variety of career fields, and remain more attractive to their employers. It has been further demonstrated that counseled graduates of skill training programs are more flexible, optimistic, and open to learning on the work site." (p. 10)

> "In brief, when guidance and counseling programs augment the delivery of services for potential or actual dropouts, delinquents, or others alienated from establishment methods or institutions, recidivism rates are lowered, school attendance increases, educational/career goals are more firmly articulated and pursued, and placement rates increase. Further, when these programs use specific approaches, such as peer counseling by indigenous role models, early and continued employer and parent involvement, employability development through career-oriented instruction, they demonstrate consistently high levels of success." (p. 8)

How Is Vocational Guidance Supported by the Vocational Education Act?

The Vocational Education Act of 1963, as amended (most recent extensive changes were in 1976, P.L. 94-482) permits expenditure of Federal funds in States and Local Education Agencies primarily under two parts of the law. The first, the Basic Grant, Subpart 2, supports programs in vocational training in a number of forms, but does not specifically authorize vocational guidance and counseling activities. These are designated as one of the activities in the second part of the State Grant, Program Improvement and Supportive Services, Subpart 3. Not less than 20 percent of the Subpart 3 allocation is to be spent "for vocational development guidance and counseling programs and services which,..., shall include,

(1) initiation, implementation, and improvement of high quality vocational guidance and counseling programs and activities;

(2) vocational counseling for children, youth, and adults, leading to greater understanding of educational and vocational options;

(3) provision of educational and job placement services, including programs to prepare individuals for professional occupations or occupations requiring a baccalaureate or higher degree, including followup services;

(4) vocational guidance and counseling training designed to acquaint guidance counselors with (A) the changing work patterns of women, (B) ways of effectively overcoming occupational sex stereotyping, and (C) ways of assisting girls and women in selecting careers solely on their occupational needs and interests, and to develop improved career counseling materials which are free [sic];

(5) vocational and educational counseling for youth offenders and adults in correctional institutions;

(6) vocational guidance and counseling for persons of limited English-speaking ability;

(7) establishment of vocational resource centers to meet the special needs of out of school individuals, including individuals seeking second careers, individuals entering the job market late in life, handicapped individuals, individuals from economically depressed communities and areas, and early retirees; and

(8) leadership for vocational guidance and exploration programs at the local level.

Vocational Education Act of 1963,
Section 134, as amended by
P.L. 94-482.

Of the monies appropriated to these two subparts for vocational education, 80 percent is distributed through the Basic Grant, Subpart 2, and 20 percent through Program Improvement and Supportive Services, Subpart 3. Thus, 20 percent of the 20 percent is mandated for the above-described vocational guidance and counseling activities.

In fiscal year 1981, the Subparts 2 and 3 Vocational Education Appropriation totaled $611.404 million. The Program Improvement portion (Subpart 3) was $93.323 million, making the 20 percent setaside for vocational guidance and counseling $18.664 million. The President's proposal for FY 82 is $723.393 million, $99.623 million and $19.925 million, respectively. (*Education Daily*, March 12, 1981, and June 10, 1981.)

In practice, it appears that states spend more than the mandated amount for guidance and counseling. For FY 1979, the states reported to the Vocational Education Data System (VEDS) Federal expenditures of about $38 million for guidance and counseling under the Program Improvement subpart. This amounted to 35.4 percent of the total. Since this is the first year of VEDS reporting and comparable figures for other years are not available, it is uncertain whether this is a consistent pattern or a one-time occurrence. Were it to continue, the expenditures of Federal funds for FY 81 would be just over $33 million and FY 82 about $35.267 million.

In addition to the expenditure of Federal funds, States reported to VEDS that $168.4 million in non-Federal money was spent on guidance and counseling, about 70 percent of the total non-Federal expenditures for program improvement. (VES, Interim Report, 1980, p. VI-36.)

It is not at all clear that anyone has an accurate picture of what activities--of the eight general areas mentioned in the law--are supported by Federal funds. There is no current requirement for the States to report this information in a way that is uniform and consistent enough across states so that a composite picture of what is happening in all fifty states could be drawn.

An attempt was made by the National Vocational Guidance Association and the American Personnel and Guidance Association to examine eight of the annual State Plans and accountability reports for FY 79 to find an answer to this question. The effort was a frustrating one to the researcher,

> Rarely are substance and the spirit of the law engaged in final reports, nor are impact data present to any degree. Focused as they are on compliance statements, related to each section of the law, state accountability reports offer minimum information about what actually happens to students enrolled in vocational programs as it relates to guidance services. (Gushee, p. 13.)

Despite this limitation, the author was able to determine if guidance and counseling was at least mentioned as an activity to be conducted under the Program Improvement grants and the category of activities described. In summary, of the eight states

seven	supported Vocational Counseling for Students and Adults (Category 2 in the law cited above),
six	supported leadership at local levels (Category 8),
five	supported in-service training for counselors (Category 4),

four supported the initiation of programs (Category 1) and placement services (Category 3),

three supported vocational resource centers (Category 7), and

two supported counseling for offenders (Category 5) and persons of limited English-speaking ability (Category 6).

This information should not be interpreted for anything more than it is, i.e., a statement of uses to which eight states put a portion of their Federal vocational education funds. Given the discretion which State directors exercise over the expenditure of funds, and the abundance of non-Federal money spent on guidance and counseling, it is clear that a given state could have the entire range of programs indicated in the legislation, but the State Plan and accountability reports delivered to Washington would likely not describe the comprehensive program in that state.

This author has not been able to find any source that came closer to providing this description.

Do Other Federal Programs Support Vocational Guidance?

Yes. Although the exact number and scope of activities covered is not clear.

A November 1979 analysis by the National Center for Research in Vocational Education looked at the provisions of ten separate pieces of legislation, each of which had reference to support of guidance and counseling (Erpenbach, 1979). This analysis included:

Public Law No.	Title
95-270	Career Education Incentive Act
95-524	Comprehensive Employment and Training Act
94-482	Education Amendments of 1976 (includes revisions of VEA)
95-561	Education Amendments of 1978
94-142	Education of All Handicapped Children Act of 1975
95-523	Full Employment and Balance-of-Growth Act of 1978
93-415	Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974
93-641	National Health Planning and Resources Development Act of 1974
95-478	Older Americans Act Amendments of 1978
95-602	Rehabilitation, Comprehensive Services, and Developmental Disabilities Amendments of 1978

References to guidance and counseling in these laws vary in their specificity and scope of understanding of what guidance is. For example, the Rehabilitation, Comprehensive Services, and Developmental Disabilities Amendments of 1978 (P.L. 95-602) provides for a wide range of services to the handicapped and emphasizes the developmental needs of the individual first. The rehabilitation counselor is responsible for the client as he/she moves through

the rehabilitation process. In this case, counseling is central to the services authorized by law, but vocational counseling would be only part of these services.

On the other hand, the Full Employment and Balanced Growth Act of 1978 calls for the Secretary of Labor to provide for "an initial determination of the job seeker's ability to be employed at certain types and duration of work, so that such individuals may be appropriately referred to jobs, counseling, and other supportive services" [Section 206(d)]. This provision could be interpreted to call for a complex counseling, guidance, and appraisal process, including all of the central elements of vocational guidance described earlier--appraisal, information, counseling, and skill development.

Reviewing the provisions of these several laws, the reader gets the impression that counseling is a desirable or necessary adjunct to the services envisioned by the lawmakers. In only a few cases was a title or provision specifically set up for counseling services (e.g., Title IV-D of the Education Amendments of 1978). More often than not, counseling is an adjunct to the central set of services.

A second impression is that there really is no difference in the kinds of guidance called for which cannot be accounted for by the law's purposes or the character of the target group. While this may appear a truism and a rational way for Congress to act (which the present author tends to believe), it does allow us to understand that the rationale for the variety of laws does not have to do with Congress' attitudes about the guidance--even vocational guidance--rather it has to do with its desire to serve all those groups which ought to be served, and a belief that counseling, vocational and other, is an appropriate component of these services.

What Has Been Congress' Position Concerning Guidance and Counseling in Education?

Changing. Over the last two decades, the character of Federal legislation has changed dramatically. In 1948, the National Defense Education Act offered a direct categorical and heavily funded aid for school counselors, vocational and others. Their numbers more than tripled from 13,000 in 1958 to 43,500 in 1967. (Jennings, 1980.) Today, educational guidance and counseling is the specific subject of Title IV-D of the Education Amendments of 1978, with no funds appropriated for programs. However, as noted earlier, guidance and counseling services are recognized, recommended, and/or required under the banner of a variety of other Federal programs in schools and other social service settings.

According to one participant, the changes in legislation affecting school counseling are not reflections of Congress' attitude or belief about what is best in this area. Rather, they represent responses to other pressures, e.g., a growing trend toward a reduction in categorical programs begun in the late 1960's and President Nixon's drive in the early 1970's for program consolidation under the banner of New Federalism. (Jennings, 1980.) Counseling programs were a convenient candidate for change because of the perception that they are ancillary activities, the lack of political activity by the profession, and Congress' difficulty in understanding much of the jargon-laden material provided by the counselors themselves.

From a Congressional perspective, a case can be made that the counseling services in general, and vocational guidance in particular, are

well covered under the existing collection of social service and education laws. Legal and related counseling services are funded under the Older Americans Act. Millions of dollars are spent for counseling under Title I, ESEA, and the Education for All Handicapped Children Act. Counseling is also supported under the Social Security Title XX, the General Revenue Sharing Act (at least indirectly), the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act, and the National Health Planning Act.

For vocational counseling, almost the entire budget for the United States Employment Service involves counseling, and many thousands of counselors are hired under the Vocational Rehabilitation Act. The Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) requires that appropriate counseling and placement services be provided to all participants. Vocational guidance and counseling are also mandated expenditures under the Career Education Incentive Act and the Vocational Education Amendments.

Neither Congress nor anyone else can tell just how much money is spent and how many people are served under the guidance and counseling provisions of these laws. Separate reports of counseling expenditures are not required, possibly due to the perception that counseling is an ancillary, not central, service. For example, although CETA was a $9.5 billion program in FY 78 and program sponsors were required to make available appropriate guidance, counseling, and placement services, there is no estiamte at the national level of how much this amounted to. Under CETA Title IV, 22 percent of the funds were to be spent on programs for in-school youth, in collaboration with local schools. Again, there is no report of how much of this went for vocational guidance and counseling, one of the eligible activities.

The House Committee on Education and Labor noted in 1976, "A sound vocational guidance and counseling program is essential for a good vocational education program." (Report 94-1085, p. 46.) This sentiment seems to exist in the other education and work-related laws, as each one includes provisions for guidance and counseling.

One can only speculate on what actions the ninety-seventh Congress will take, given the changes in party control and Administration. Many of these programs have been severely cut back in the FY 82 budget proposals and some (e.g. Career Education) are proposed for consolidation under a block grant program.

Given the Diversity of Programs and Funding Sources, Does Congress See These Operating as Uncoordinated Programs?

Congress has addressed this issue twice in recent years. The Education Amendments of 1978, P.L. 95-561, consolidated several educational programs into single titles. Two things happened to guidance and counseling.

In 1974, counseling programs had been consolidated into Title IV-B, along with instructional materials and library resources. The hoped-for simplification of application procedures and administrative overhead had occurred, and, in 1978, Congress judged the consolidation a success except for the counseling programs. Testimony was heard before the House and Senate that the inclusion of a "things" oriented program (instructional materials) and a "people" oriented program (guidance and counseling) created competition in some local districts between two areas which "the Committee feels are both of high priority." Witnesses suggested that these programs should not be made to compete with each other.

Instructional materials and libraries were retained in Title IV-B, and guidance and counseling moved to a new Title IV-D. The purpose was to provide Federal funds for State leadership and local programs in the fields of guidance, counseling, and testing. The law also called for establishing an office with the Department of Education to advise the Secretary on the coordination of all guidance and counseling programs in the Department and within other Federal agencies.

In effect, the competition was moved from the local agencies to the halls of Congress, as the two titles were separate line items in the appropriations process. Only once were funds appropriated to Title IV-D, but were rescinded before they were spent. Funds have not been appropriated since.

Thus, funds were not distributed to the States for leadership activities in guidance and counseling, nor was the office in ED given program funds under this Title to foster the hoped-for coordination.

The Education Amendments of 1980 (P.L. 96-374) authorized a number of post-secondary programs under Title I-B, "Education Outreach Programs." They include Statewide planning, information services, and continuing education, and are targeted toward adults who traditionally have not been well served, if at all, by post-secondary educational institutions. Section 114 authorizes States to "conduct programs to develop and coordinate new and existing educational and occupational information and counseling programs to eliminate unnecessary duplication and to provide a more comprehensive delivery of services to both traditional and nontraditional learners seeking educational information and to youths and adults seeking occupational information."

Congress then instructed that the educational and occupational information and counseling programs be coordinated with those authorized by the Vocational Education Act, the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act, the Older Americans Act of 1965, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Career Education Incentive Act, the Adult Education Act, the Veterans Readjustment Act, and other Federal, State, and Local activities with similar outreach and information purposes.

The conclusion seems reasonable that the framers of the 1980 amendments were aware of the many laws authorizing similar counseling and guidance programs, and wanted to encourage States to coordinate these efforts. (Similar provisions are in the VEA.) They set a $50,000 or 12 percent (whichever is greater) minimum for this. It is unlikely, however, that much will get done under this banner. The entire set of Title I-B programs

received a $15 million appropriation in FY 80, was cut to $2.2 million in FY 81, and the President has not requested any funds for FY 82.

A reasonable conclusion, therefore, would be that Congressional framers of the authorizing legislation are well aware of the diversity within the several laws which allow Federal funds to be spent on a variety of guidance and counseling activities. Their solution is to require States and local districts to establish administrative procedures to coordinate planning and service activities.

The likelihood that this has happened is slim. In both these cases, 1978 and 1980, the appropriations process has not provided the funds to accomplish the aims of the authorizing legislation. Nor does a process exist for regularly gathering the information that would allow judgments concerning the extent of coordination and cooperation which may or may not exist.

What Are the Barriers to Administrative Efficiency and Coordination at the Local Level?

There are several, some of which are related to the patrern of multiple Federal programs.

There are at least two schools of thought on the effect of having multiple programs for similar purposes. One suggests that the multiplicity is wasteful. Too many people are involved in similar activities and do not talk to one another or share resources. Not only might funds get squandered, but no one set of professionals has the resources to set up a comprehensive system to deliver services.

The other school of thought would say that the multiplicity is good because it allows practitioners the opportunity to seek funds from many sources and garner more than any one of them might yield. A creative grants person could set up a first-class program with an array of opportunities such as these.

Unfortunately, there is little information from a large selection of sites to identify which in fact is the case with respect to vocational guidance and counseling. Nor is such an information-gathering effort within the scope of this project. However, based on a number of conversations with guidance and counseling professionals--a sample that pretends to be neither random nor representative--this author suspects the former school would more accurately describe the current state of vocational guidance.

A number of factors work against administrative efficiency, program coordination, and the provision of comprehensive services.

First, guidance professionals exist in separate administrative organizations, such as school systems, colleges, employment service agencies,

CETA programs, adult community centers, etc. The pattern of Federal legialation channels funds through these different administrative units that may also exist at the Federal and State levels. With different sources of funds, different reporting and authority structures, rules and regulations that are not compatible and even possibly contradictory, the hoped-for coordination and collaboration is seldom realized.

Second, these various Federal programs continually refer to vocational guidance and counseling as an ancillary or adjunct service to a primary program focus. Sometimes specific percentages or amounts are set aside for guidance; sometimes States comply with these regulations and sometimes they do not. As a consequence, guidance professionals operate under the direction of administrators whose experience and concern is not just guidance, but some more comprehensive related social service. The scope and largess accorded to the guidance function and staff are heavily dependent on the administrator's discretion, as are the possibilities for collaboration among programs.

Third, while the legislation is broad enough to let guidance professionals sponsor the kinds of activities they want--if the funds are available--it is not consistent in terminology and is interpreted differently by administrators and practitioners. Under the same law, program focus can range from immediate placement in a job to longer-range career development. Terms like "vocational guidance" and "career guidance" are interpreted differently, although an argument could be made that they are used at times interchangeably in the separate laws. Thus, program interests and practices can be radically different, even though the source of their funding and legislative umbrellas are the same or are seen by Congress as intimately related and relatively easily coordinated.

Fourth, local school guidance personnel have responsibilities within the system in addition to the functions of appraisal, information, counseling, and skill development, They often have a heavy work load in terms of scheduling courses in high school--an increasingly time-consuming process in days of greater student choice, spend time with discipline and truancy cases, administer standardized testing programs, etc. These duties plus those of maintaining the occupational information system and assisting students generally leaves little time to coordinate and collaborate with other professionals, no matter how potentially useful the outcome may be. The duties and tasks which the school and other service organizations define as primary simply take up the time and energies of all but the most dynamic and resourceful practitioner.

What Changes, if any, Have Been Proposed for the Guidance Provisions of the Vocational Education Act?

As of this writing, August 1981, there have not been specific legislative proposals from the Administration, the American Vocational Association, or other interested groups concerning the reauthorization of vocational education. There are, however, two position papers that suggest frameworks for the reauthorization of the VEA.

The AVA's "Recommended Framework for Re-Authorization of the Vocational Education Act of 1963, P.L. 94-482" deals with the entire Act. A framework is set for strengthening the vocational education programs at the State and Local levels and giving the Federal Government a less directive role in the administration of funds and programs. Guidance and counseling is seldom mentioned in the framework, and few, if any, changes are directed at these programs. There is no mention of keeping the 20 percent setaside under Program Improvement and Supportive services.

The monograph, "Strengthening Work-Related Education and Training through Improved Guidance Programs in the 1980's" is a joint effort of the National Vocational Guidance Association (a Division of the American Personnel and Guidance Association) and the Guidance Division of the American Vocational Association. The document makes two points pertinent to the legislation. The first is that the field of vocational guidance has evolved in recent years to take on the characteristics of an educational program and should be so considered in the legislative and administrative framework. These changes are summarized:

(1) At one time guidance was practiced mainly as a process to help young people make the transition from school to work. Now guidance includes that goal, but is much more. Now guidance is a program that assists individuals of all ages and circumstances to live more effective lives and be more effective citizens.

(2) At one time guidance was practiced mainly as an ancillary, crisis-oriented service. Now guidance is understood and practiced as a comprehensive, developmental program, early childhood through the adult years, based on personal and societal needs. Crises and problems are responded to from a developmental perspective.

(3) At one time guidance was practiced mainly as a way to assess the aptitude and interests of individuals to assist them in occupational choice making. Now guidance includes that goal and much more. Now guidance is practiced as a program that assists all individuals to develop competencies in self-understanding, interpersonal relations, decision making, goal setting, and planning, so that they are able to make effective life decisions including informed occupational choices. (p. 2.)

The second point is that vocational guidance programs, based on the available evidence, can make significant contributions to the goals and roles outlined in the above-mentioned AVA Framework for Vocational Education, specifically,

- Strengthening Depressed Communities
- Meeting the Nation's Need for Qualified Workers
- Keeping the Vocational Education Program Relevant
- Meeting the Nation's Equity Goals

The NVGA and the AVA Guidance Division have not endorsed specific legislative proposals, but the authors of this framework have drafted tentative proposals that are being discussed by their organizations. In essence, they would move vocational guidance to a more central place in the array of vocational education services and programs. This would be accomplished by including explicit reference to guidance programs in the catalogue of vocational programs and purposes, including by explicit reference, guidance counselors and guidance programs

for all in-service programs and materials or curriculum development, and ensuring representation of the guidance community on advisory councils and in the planning process. They would also move support for most guidance and counseling programs from the Program Improvement and Support Services, Subpart 3, to the Basic State Grant, Subpart 2, with a setaside of six percent of the total State grant and innovative programs appropriation. Based on the President's proposed FY 81 appropriations, this would change the mandated expenditures from approximately $20 million to $33 million.

In 1976, Congress had intended to reconsider the Vocational Education Act in 1981 or 1982. It is unclear what the legislative timetable will be since Congress extended the current Vocational Educarion Act through fiscal year 1984 as part of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981 (P.L. 87-35). No changes in the scope of activities nor administrative structures were made at this time.

As a consequence, the proposals and positions outlined here should be interpreted as guides to how two segments of the Vocational Education community regard the guidance function and to the positions that might be set forth when the VEA is considered in more detail.

Is There a Unique Position for the Federal Government in Regard to Occupational Information?

As noted elsewhere, occupational information is an essential component of the vocational guidance and counseling process. Information is used in at least two ways. The first is to estimate the demand for occupations so that program planners and students can have a sense of the likelihood of employment in a given field after completing training. The second is to describe what it is like to work in various fields (skills used, tasks performed, working conditions, aptitudes needed, etc.) so that youths and adults can make the crucial decisions about whether their abilities and interests will be used and their goals met.

The Federal Government continues to be the primary source of this information for the nation as a whole, and the primary source of financial and technical support for efforts to develop and use it at the State and Local levels.

Projections of occupational demand--the extent to which certain occupational areas are expected to need workers in the future--are based on statistical analysis of trends and difficult judgments about the extent to which these patterns will continue in the future. For example, the demand for school teachers was projected to grow in the 1960's (due to the entrance of the World War II baby boom generation into the elementary grades), and is now projected to decline (due to this group's passing through adolescence into early adulthood), although, due to increased specialization in education, certain types of teachers will continue to be needed (e.g., those who work with the disabled).

The simple fact is that the collection, analysis, and distribution of this information is done by several Federal agencies--among them, the U. S. Bureau of the Census (Commerce Department), Bureau of Labor Statistics and Employment Service (Labor Department). Our country would not have the ability to make these projections--however tentative--were not these Federal efforts in place.

Guidance programs use State and local area projections as well. These are compiled from data supplied by employers in the area and by making technical adjustments in the national or regional projections. The local data collection is heavily subsidized by the Federal Government through support of the State Employment Service. The adjustment procedures are designed by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics which also gives technical assistance to State and local officials making these changes. If State and local governments were left on their own to develop this information, the enitre program would likely cost the taxpayer more than the current arrangements. Moreover, because definitions and methods would differ, the information might not be useful beyond the boundaries of the jurisdications collecting it. This latter would affect the tens of millions of people in labor market areas which encompass several jurisdictions. It might also make it virtually impossible to cumulate the local data into national figures, as is done now.

In addition to having a sense of whether an opening in a field will be there after training, individuals making occupational choices want to know what the work is like and to have some basic information about the jobs before they make even a temporary commitment. Common questions include: How much money can I expect to make? What training and experience are commonly required? What is the work environment like, clean, noisy, cold, etc.? Will I be working with people or machines, or a combination of these? and a host of others.

The National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee has identified sixteen sources of this kind of information on occupational characteristics. (NOICC, 1981.) Fourteen of these are compiled by the Federal Government or supported directly by Federal funds. While many booklets, pamphlets, and fact sheets are available to describe various occupational areas, the vast majority of the information for these descriptions comes directly from the *Dictionary of Occupational Titles*, and/or the *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, both of which are published by the Federal Government. Material sold by private companies is often largely a re-packaging of the government information with some additions to fit a specific audience's needs.

The Educational Testing Service survey on occupational information in high schools has found that of all the sources of information available, the only ones reported to be available in over half of the schools are the *Dictionary* and the *Handbook*. (ETS, 1981.) The third edition of the *Dictionary* was published in 1965 and sold 148,000 copies in 13 years. The fourth edition was published in December 1977 and sold 115,000 copies in the first 21 months, in addition to the 30,000 in use by the Employment Service, the Agency responsible for its production. (Miller et al, 1980.)

The key to using this information for vocational counseling is the assurance that the occupations are described in terms meaningful to the individual. The original designers of the information collection process and category schemes did not always have this purpose in mind. Another critical task is to combine the information from several sources, each of which has some bits of information that are of interest and use to the individual and counselor.

Again, these two tasks are being heavily supported by the Federal Government through the National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (NOICC) and the network of State Occupational Information Coordinating Committees (SOICC). This network was established by Congress through several laws. It was first mentioned in the Vocational Education Act of 1976 [Sec. 161(b)(1) and (2)]. The Congress elaborated on the mission and scope of the NOICC and SOICC activities in the Youth Employment and Demonstration Projects Act of 1977 [P.L. 95-93, Sec. 348(c)(1)], and the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act Amendments of 1978 [P.L. 95-524, Sec. 315(a)(3)].

The NOICC represents a joint venture of the Departments of Education and Labor, with funding from both Departments. Its responsibility is to develop and implement an occupational information system to be used at the national, state, and local levels in the planning and administration of vocational programs and in counseling youths and adults in making career choices. In developing the system, NOICC's charter is to ensure that the information is based on uniform definitions, standard estimating procedures, and standardized occupational classifications. The NOICC is to pay particular attention to the information on needs of CETA and vocational education programs and to the information needs of youths. The Committee was also given responsibility for encouraging the development of statewide computerized systems to deliver career information. This program now includes about 30 states, if nine states originally funded in the mid-1970's through a Labor demonstration program are included.

As with the other occupational information sources, Congress has recognized the economies of scale achieved by establishing and coordinating these programs at a national level to insure the highest quality information

for the least cost and, through standardization of methods and classification procedures, to ensure the usefulness of the information to the largest number of people possible.

TITLE: Vocational Education Act of 1963, as amended

CITATION: P.L. 94-482 and 95-40, Subpart 3, Program Improvement and Supportive Services. Signed by President October 12, 1976.

HISTORY: House Reports 94-1085
94-1701 (Conference)
Senate Reports 94-882

REGULATIONS: 45 CFR 104, Subpart 3 most recently issued October 3, 1977, Federal Register, V. 42, No. 191.

FUNDING:	FY 79	FY 80	FY 81	FY 82
Millions	$112.0	$124.8	$93.3	$99.6

Purpose: To support efforts to improve vocational education. Guidance and counseling programs and services are one of eight general types of programs identified.

Distribution Process: Federal Government distribution to the States by Formula as part of the basic grant: 20 percent of total Subpart 3 to be used for Guidance and Counseling.

State must have approved five-year plan and annual update approved by the Federal Office of Adult and Vocational Education, ED.

State distribution to Local is by application, competition or formula, as the State so wishes and the Federal approves.

Comments from Legislative Reports:

Senate:

"Witnesses before the Committee documented in detail the need for increased Federal attention to the often-slighted field of vocational guidance and counseling, as an integral part of preparing our nation's students to make informed occupational and career choices." (94-882, p. 80)

"The Committee Bill provides that applications for guidance and counseling funds shall set forth cooperative arrangements with community groups and agencies, in order to avoid unnecessary duplication in the provision of services to the area or community to be served. This provision reflects the consistent theme of the Committee Bill—that all community resources should be employed to assure the best possible vocational programs with a minimum of overlap and duplication." (94-882, p. 82)

House:

"The Committee Bill creates a new section of the law for supportive services. This section contains many of the activities which are now authorized under 'ancillary services' in the present law, and it adds several new authorized uses of funds. The reason that the Committee incorporated some of the present authorized ancillary services into this new section is to achieve greater accountability from States on their uses of these funds. Not all of the present ancillary services, however, are incorporated; only those dealing with vocational guidance and counseling, pre- and in-service training of teachers, and State Administration and local supervision are authorized." (94-1085, p. 45)

"All of the supportive services mentioned above are authorized, but not required, to be funded by the States, with the exception of vocational guidance and counseling programs, services, and activities which must be funded to a certain extent by each State, as has already been pointed out. A sound vocational guidance and counseling program is essential for a good vocational education program." (94-1085, p. 46)

TITLE: Career Education Incentive Act

CITATION: P.L. 95-207, Career Education Incentive Act.
Signed by President, December 13, 1977.

HISTORY:
House Reports 95-150
95-816 (Conference)
Senate Reports 95-598
95-513

REGULATIONS: 45 CFR 161, most recently issued on October 17, 1979, Federal Register, V. 44, No. 202.

FUNDING:	FY 79	FY 80	FY 81	FY 82
Millions	$32.5	$15	$10	Proposed for Block Grant

Purpose: To increase the emphasis placed on career education, promote equal opportunity in career choices and eliminate practices which promote bias and stereotyping.

Distribution Process: State Plans approved by ED result in formula distribution to the SEA (minimum $100,000). Fifteen percent can stay at the State level for leadership activities and planning. The remainder is distributed to the local schools for career education programs. At least 15% of the LEA funds (on a state average) must be used for comprehensive guidance, counseling, placement and followup. About $2 million in FY 80 and $1.3 million in FY 81.

Comments from Legislative Reports:

Guidance and counseling are viewed as central to the purposes of the Career Education Incentive Act and thus the setaside provision which is not required of every school district and project, but must be demonstrated in the statewide averages for use of funds.

Congress mandates that these funds are to be distributed separately from vocational education, which is characterized as being for the purposes of specific skill training.

A section of the Bill directs the Commissioner to look at the career information needs of the nation and makes reference to the tasks and purposes of National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (NOICC).

TITLE: Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended

CITATION: P.L. 95-561, Title IV-D, Guidance, Counseling, and Testing. Signed by President, November 1, 1978.

HISTORY:
House Reports 95-1137, May 5, 1978
95-1753, October 10, 1978 (Conference)
Senate Reports 95-856, May 15, 1978

REGULATIONS: 45 CFR 134, most recently issued on April 7, 1980, Federal Register, V. 45, No. 68.

FUNDING: Millions	FY 79	FY 80	FY 81	FY 82
		-0-	-0-	-0-

Purpose: To provide Federal funds for State leadership and local programs in the fields of Guidance, Counseling, and Testing. Also calls for establishing an Office within ED to advise the Secretary on coordination of all Guidance and Counseling programs in the Department and within other Federal agencies.

Distribution Process: Federal Government distribution to the States on basis of formula after approval of a general application and submission of State Plan which describes purposes for which funds will be spent.

State distributes to Local Education Agency on basis of general application and description of how funds will be used. Either formula or competition can be used for within-State distribution. The LEA is to have total discretion in selecting activities from among those authorized by law.

Comments from Legislative Reports:

The consolidation of Title IV, ESEA, in 1974 resulted in the elimination of several separate categorical programs. As noted below, by 1978, the Congress was satisfied that consolidation had achieved several administrative goals, but that Guidance, Counseling, and Testing activities should be set apart into a new Title IV-D.

The Title now includes programs:

Part B - Instructional Material and Library Resources
Part C - Improvement of Local Educational Practices
Part D - Guidance, Counseling, and Testing
Part E - Education of Gifted and Talented Children

Consolidation was deemed a success because reductions in paperwork have occurred at all levels. "According to an OE program official, the 4,000 data items previously requested for the categorical programs have

been pared down to 293 for the consolidation. The number of staff at the Federal level has been reduced by 30 percent. At the State level, one annual program report now replaces six previous State plans and applications. Local people also testified that with the exception of the single application form, which is discussed later, administration has been simplified and the amount of preparation time reduced." (Senate Report 95-856, p. 48.) Essentially the same text appears in the House Report 95-1137, p. 60.

Guidance, counseling, and testing were separated out from the Title involving libraries and instructional materials because of the competition set up at the local level. The following text also occurs in essentially the same form in both reports.

"The Title IV-B consolidation enacted in 1974 represented a marriage of programs that could rightly be termed 'things' oriented--such as library resources and instructional materials--with programs that could be termed 'people' oriented--such as guidance, counseling, and testing. This marriage has caused a great deal of competition in some local districts between two areas which the Committee feels are both of high priority. The IV-B consolidation has forced local administrators to make decisions at the expense of one or the other activities. Most of the witnesses who appeared before the Subcommittee on Education, Arts, and Humanities concurred that everyone would be better off if the resources and the personnel activities were not forced to compete with each other for funding.

"Consequently, the Committee has decided that it is best to remove guidance, counseling, and testing from the existing Title IV-B. In order to achieve this, a separate program--a new IV-D--is proposed to fund all types of activities involving guidance, counseling, and testing. This program will combine not only the payment of counselors' salaries from IV-B, but also the payments for State and Local guidance and counseling activities which the Committee believes are consistent with the authorized activities of Section 341 of the Education Amendments of 1976." (Senate Report 95-856, pp. 50-51.)

In effect, the decision on relative funding levels was taken from the Local level and placed in the hands of the Federal Appropriations Process. The "people" programs of Guidance, Counseling, and Testing have lost out in that no funds have been appropriated in FY 80 or 81, while the other programs have received appropriations:

	FY 80	FY 81
Part B	$171 M	$128.3M
Part C	146	50
Part E	6.3	6.3 (Now Title IX-A of ESEA)

The Commissioner ruled on July 18, 1979, (in a letter to Chief State School Officers) that the Local Education Agencies could continue to fund Guidance and Counseling under Part B for FY 80, but not thereafter.

TITLE: Youth Employment and Training Programs, Title IV of the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act

CITATIONS: P.L. 95-93, Youth Employment and Demonstration Projects Act of 1977. Signed by President August 5, 1977.

P.L. 95-524, Comprehensive Employment and Training Act of 1978, Title IV, Youth Employment and Training Programs, Part A. Signed by President October 27, 1978.

HISTORY: P.L. 95-93:

House Reports	94-1146
	95-314
	95-456 (Conference)
Senate Reports	94-1053
	95-173

P.L. 95-524:

House Reports	95-1124
	95-1765 (Conference)
Senate Reports	95-891
	95-1325 (Conference)

REGULATIONS: 20 CFR 680, most recently issued on October 2, 1979, in Federal Register, V. 44, No. 192.

FUNDING:	FY 79	FY 80	FY 81	FY 82
Millions	$500.	$692.	$692.	$576.

Purpose: Title supports several separate youth employment and training programs, all with the purpose of providing the training, experience, and job opportunities to enable the youth to find unsubsidized employment.

Title also stipulates that all programs should provide the opportunity for earning academic credit and shall provide guidance and placement services.

Distribution Process: Formula Grants to Prime Sponsors on the basis of approved annual plans. Prime Sponsors distribute funds to local projects. Minimum of 22 percent of program under this title (Youth Employment and Training Program) must be used for in-school youth pursuant to written agreements with local school agencies.

Comments from Legislative Reports:

There appears to have been little disagreement over the academic credit and mandated counseling and placement services.

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